The Chronicle and Index

OF THE UNITARIAN SOCIETY.

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THE Rev. J. C. Street will be glad to receive contributions from friends in aid of the gratuitous publication and circulation of the *Chronicle and Index*. Communications may be sent to him at the Depository, Queen's Arcade, Belfast.

THE holiday people who have been seeking health and recreation by sea and mountain, will now be winding their way home with invigorated health, and ready, we trust, to enter with new life and energy upon the work which lies before all who seek the welfare of the world.

THE ANNUAL FLORAL SERVICE was held in the Church of the Second Congregation, on Sunday, July 1st., and was attended by an immense crowd of children and adults, who filled pews and aisles to the very doors of the spacious church. The building was exquisitely decorated with flowers and foliage, and the arrangements and devices bore testimony to the skill and affection of many loving hands and hearts that had worked to produce the beautiful result. Every one present carried flowers, and the sight presented to admiring eyes was extremely beautiful. The Schools of the Second Congregation, Hopewell Street, Stanhope Street, Moneyrea, and Mountpottinger, were present, as well as friends from all the congregations in the neighbourhood. The music was very attractive—the singing of the children being very sweet, and the organ, under the skilful fingers of Mr. H. Darbishire, poured forth a flood of melody. The Service was conducted by the Rev. J. C. Street, whose address was listened to with eager attention. At the close of the service the crowds of children and adults lingered to enjoy the beauty of the flowers, and those who came from the country were entertained at tea in the School room. The flowers were subsequently sent to the Royal Hospital and the Union Hospital, where they would give delight to the sufferers in both Institutions.

ON Sunday afternoon, the 22nd ult., at four o'clock, the annual floral service was held at Mountpottinger. The church was very tastefully decorated with moss, ferns, and flowers, one special feature being that every scholar received a bouquet before coming in to the service. Appropriate hymns were sung with much heartiness by the children, and the Rev. J. J. Wright gave the address on "What Flowers have Said to Men;" being assisted in the conduct of the service by his brother, Mr. C. Wright, of Manchester. A large Congregation attended, and a collection, amounting to £5 5s was taken on behalf of the children's excursion.

DROMORE.—The annual school *fete* took place on Thursday, July 26th, and was in all respects most successful. The teachers and scholars assembled at the meeting-house at twelve o'clock, and, after singing and prayer, partook of refreshments. They then marched through the town and were joined on the way by the Second Dromore Sunday-school, and all went together to Clanmurray and spent the afternoon very pleasantly. The weather was splendid, and large numbers of friends joined the party towards the evening. Fruit was supplied in the field, and an excellent tea was provided in the meeting-house at the close. Rev. D. Thompson addressed the school, and took occasion to thank Mr. W. Jardine for the use of his lawn, and the other friends for their kind help.

LARNE AND KILNAUGHTON SUNDAY-SCHOOL.—The entertainment annually given to the scholars attending this school and to the children of the Congregation generally, was held on Friday, July 27th, and was very numerously attended. The young people, with their friends and teachers, began to assemble in the school-room about three in the afternoon, when, after singing by the Sunday-school choir and prayer by Rev. James Black, Manchester, tea, &c., were liberally dispensed. The remainder of the evening was spent in out-door games and amusement in the grounds adjoining—many of the leading members of the Congregation devoting themselves to the entertainment of the children, while a band, composed of young men belonging to the Congregation,

supplied music to those of more mature years who were inclined to dance. At nine o'clock the company re-assembled in the school-room, when a resolution of welcome to visitors and friends was acknowledged in a speech, at once humorous and instructive, by Rev. James Kedwards of Raloo. The pronouncing of the benediction brought to a close a most successful and happy meeting.

MONEYREA.—The annual scholars' festival was held at Moneyrea on Saturday week. There was a large attendance of scholars and friends. The Ballygowan band attended and acquitted itself excellently. On Sunday week the school sermons were preached—in the morning by Rev. H. V. Mills, of Colne; in the evening by Baboo Protap Chunder Mozoomdar. The Congregation in the evening was very large, and the Baboo Mozoomdar delivered a most impressive discourse on the meaning of the word "God," which he showed was life, law, love, holiness. The collections were larger than usual for some years past.

GLENARM: ORDINATION OF THE REV. J. HALL.—On Thursday week the Presbytery of Templepatrick received the resignation of the Rev. Jas. Callwell, after a ministry extending over twenty-eight years, and ordained the Rev. James Hall, late student of the Unitarian Home Missionary Board, as his successor to the pastoral charge of the Old Congregation. The ceremony took place in the Old Meeting House, Glenarm. The officiating ministers were Revs. F. Thomas, Cairncastle, who conducted the introductory services; F. Martin Blair, of Templepatrick, who preached from Isaiah lviii. 12; Moore Getty, Rallycarry, who explained and defended Presbyterian government; James Kennedy, Larne, who offered up the ordination prayer; James Black, M.A., Todmorden, who delivered the charge to the young minister; James Callwell, Glenarm, the charge to the congregation; Alex. Gordon, M.A., Belfast, who gave the concluding prayer and benediction. After the ordination a dinner was provided in the vestry by the Congregation for the ministers and friends. The Rev. James Callwell occupied the chair, and Mr. John Jellie, J.P., the vice-chair. The usual loyal and patriotic sentiments having been honoured, a hearty welcome was tendered to Mr. Hall, who replied in suitable terms. Mr. Jellie proposed the health of the retiring minister, and expressed in heartfelt language his regret and that of the Congregation at the continued ill-health of Mr. Callwell, and the hope that with rest and change of air he would be spared for many years. Mr. Callwell having replied, the meeting was brought to a close.

DUNSTON-ON-TYNE: OPENING OF A UNITARIAN CHURCH.—The above-named village which is situated near Newcastle-upon-Tyne, was the scene of an event of more than ordinary interest on Sunday, August 5th. Some of the residents in that locality who had previously been connected with Methodism have of late been gradually broadening in their theology, and have at last adopted the Unitarian platform. A short time ago the Wesleyans determined to remove from the chapel in which they had been accustomed to worship to another building in the village. The supporters of the liberal faith, who had been brought up within the Wesleyan fold, taking advantage of the opportunity thus presented, determined to open out the old chapel as a Unitarian place of worship. With the object of having regular divine service, they entered into communication with the Committee of the Northumberland and Durham Unitarian Christian Association, and the preliminary arrangements having been completed, the building was opened on Sunday under the title of the Bethany Free Christian Church. There were two services—afternoon and evening—when sermons appropriate to the occasion, and of great eloquence and power, were preached by the Rev. J. C. Street, of Belfast. The chapel has sitting accommodation for somewhere about 150 people. It was well filled at each service, and the extremely able addresses of the rev. gentleman were listened to with deep attention, and seemed to produce a great impression on the congregations. On monday an inaugural *soiree* took place, when a large company assembled and partook of a really excellent tea. Many friends from Newcastle, Gateshead, and South Shields were present. After tea, a public meeting was held, the proceedings of which were commenced by the Rev. Joseph Lee, of Barnard Castle, giving out a hymn, which was heartily sung by those present. Prayer was then engaged in by Mr. George Lucas, after which Mr. J. Stokoe, of Dunston, was called upon to take the chair. Mr. Stokoe expressed the great pleasure he felt at being present, and gave an interesting history of their present movement. He referred to the

struggles the originators had gone through in their endeavours to obtain a purer and higher light on religious matters, and to the fierce opposition they were receiving at the hands of a portion of their orthodox opponents. He expressed his firm belief, however, that the cause they were now establishing would overcome all opposition and be a triumphant success. Mr. William Burnett, secretary of the church expressed his thorough satisfaction with the proceedings so far as they had gone. He was sure they had exceeded anything they had dreamed of. Things, however, had not yet arrived at their best. The opposition they were encountering would excite curiosity in the place, which would tend to promote its good. Those opponents of theirs who were moving so strongly to defeat the object they had in view were in reality helping them to the best advantage. He was sure they would overcome the opposition that had been raised against them. He never felt so much in earnest about any cause as he felt about this. He had been dreaming about it for years, and when he found that that building was about to become vacant, he at once determined that a Unitarian cause should be established there. He then referred to their programme. They had a free platform, where all who had the spirit of God in them, and the desire to do good would be enabled to state their convictions. They claimed the name of Christians. He for one should not like to lose that peace which a man possessed who had Christ in his heart. He trusted that Christ would always be preached, and looked up to as the example and the friend of man. He hoped that place would be to them a spiritual home; and if they tried to realise that idea it would become a centre of usefulness in the district. They would have a Sunday-school; they intended to establish week-night prayer-meetings, and they would endeavour to preach the truth of the Gospel. He trusted that many who were now outside would soon be brought into the place and hear the word of truth. The success of that and the previous day was a warranty that the success would go on. The Rev. W. H. Lambelle, of South Shields, was next called upon. He was sure they would have no reason to complain, nor to look back with any other feeling than that of pride and satisfaction at the step they had now taken. Reference had been made to the opposition they were encountering. He felt sure of this—that there was nothing like a little opposition to show forth the strength of their faith. He urged them to faithfulness and to energy. For if they were faithful and energetic there was nothing to hinder the Unitarian body from largely increasing in numbers. Let them, above all, endeavour to show by their godly living that they had the Gospel of Christ and the grace of God in their hearts. The Rev. J. C. Street was next called upon, and delivered an eloquent and inspiriting address, which in the course of its delivery was received with great applause and other tokens of deep satisfaction on the part of the audience. Perhaps some of of them, he said, felt a little disturbed at the noise and clamour that had been made about them in the step they had taken; but let them be assured that no men had ever taken a bold step like that without having noise and clamour ings about it. It was nothing new. They should pay no heed to it, and at last they would have their reward. In the movement they were making he took for granted that they all wanted freedom. They wanted freedom in order to enjoy the truth. But over and above it all was the earnest desire that they should grow into a practical piety that would sanctify their lives. The members of the Church to which they now belonged think for themselves, and respect each other's opinions. On all things they did not think exactly alike, but there were many questions in which they were in general accord. Mr. Street then, with great eloquence, referred to their belief in God, in Christ, in immortality, &c., which found general acceptance among them, his remarks being received by many manifestations of approval. It was their duty to go forth now in the spirit of God, and battle against ignorance. They were soldiers of God and of Christ, and they would have to fight for truth, for holiness, for the kingdom of God. They must march forward in the spirit of Christ to accomplish Christ-like work. They were also labourers in a vineyard. The fields were lying before them white unto harvest. He called upon them to go forth in the spirit of self-sacrifice unto the harvest, and they would gather in great sheaves for God which would cause them to rejoice for evermore.

Mr. Burnett proposed a hearty vote of thanks to Mr. Street for his services; also to the friends of the Church of the Divine Unity, Newcastle, for the kindness they had shown them. Mr.

Atkinson seconded the vote, which was unanimously adopted. Mr. Street having replied, the Rev. Joseph Lee delivered an interesting address, in which he expressed his great sympathy with the movement, and urged them to faithfulness in the work they had taken in hand. Mr. Lee was followed by Mr. George Lucas, who spoke of the Value of Unitarianism to the world, and the proceedings which were most successful throughout, shortly afterwards came to a conclusion. We may mention that a Sunday-school has already been established under encouraging circumstances, and that the opening services were continued on following Sundays next by the Rev. J. G. Slater and Mr. George Lucas.

The Rev. THOMAS LEYLAND, of Burnley, in speaking at Blackpool, at the opening of the New Church there, said– "He desired to speak of unreality in religion. The lesson was needed as much now as ever. Just, indeed, as in the days of the Apostle there were those who kept up most zealously the religious ceremonies and customs of their fathers, because they had inherited them, and not from any inherent qualities in the things themselves, so in this our day, many people held to ceremonies and customs for the conservative reason that they were old, and not because they were in themselves helpful. To believe anything merely because it was held by others, however attractive it might be; to believe anything merely because some written statement was produced, however ancient it might be; to believe anything merely on the testimony of some prescribed teacher, however true his teaching might be; to believe anything at all merely upon some ecclesiastical authority, however time-honoured that authority might be; to believe and practice on these, or any similar grounds, was downright unreality in religion, and contrary to the advice of the apostle, that "every man be fully assured in his own mind." Very often the religion of unreality was made exceedingly attractive. Sometimes it took an ecclesiastical form; delighted in architecture and imposing show, in "storied windows richly dight," and such-like things; and then we have a time of cathedral building. Sometimes it took the form of church unity; and then we had an interesting time of sectarian, Bishop-of-Lincoln-like brotherly-love—with a view in the direction of denominational enterprise. Sometimes it would take the form of spasmodic attempts to indoctrinate with what is called Vital Religion; novels were written with a theological purpose, and poems were published with a dogmatic design; and then we had a time of perfectionism, ritualism, and general sacerdotal intolerance and bigotry. Sometimes it would take the form of continual complaint against the universe at large and the world in particular; everything was said to be "stale, flat and unprofitable," and "nothing true but heaven;" and then we had a host of people marching heavenward to the sound of trumpet, tambourine, and drum. Sometimes it took the form of overstrained and exaggerated feeling; every topic was taken up tenderly and treated with such exceeding tenderness, that the fact of divine justice was lost sight of in a mist of emotion, the character of a sublime exemplar was eliminated of every manly attribute, and the idea of heaven was degenerated into a sort of fairy-haunted dell, or an æsthetical paradise. Such were a few of the forms of the unreality in religion, or what might be fitly called the religion of unreality. No denomination was quite free from its harmful blighting influence. However attractive it might appear, its paths were not paths of permanent pleasantness, and its ways were not ways of perpetual peace. If this were not so, we should be tempted to despair of human progress, but it was some satisfaction to know that if truth, which is another name for reality, had a hard struggle for victory, error, which is another name for unreality, must out of necessity fail, for we were assured that the Divine Thought was above ours, and that our beliefs and ways could not alter one jot the realities of the universe. Having discovered the law of human evolution we need have no fear, but, on the contrary, we may have great confidence as we put into practice the new-old gospel of the amelioration of man.

MR. MONCURE CONWAY in a recent "Lesson for the Day," on "The Scape Goat," writes:—

"Every Reform had its scapegoat. In the American anti-slavery movement, when the pleadings of Garrison for the slave began to make an impression on the country, and was gradually represented in the Legislature, the man who proposed any measure adverse to slavery usually began by denouncing Garrison. Having given over the arch-agitator to the fury of Azazel, the politican could then proceed to advance the same

principles. The liberal thinkers of England did not defend Dr. Priestly when he was their scapegoat to the pious mob. In New England Theodore Parker was the Unitarian scapegoat; and now that in both Old and New England that sect has advanced to Parkerism, freer thinkers than Parker are sent into the wilderness. I wish I could say that the Scapegoat custom ends there, but it does not. The revival of intolerance has brought out the ugly fact that freethinkers themselves are not quite beyond giving up somebody as Scapegoat to the conventional Azazel. There are plenty of freethinkers in Parliament, but not one remonstrates against any slander or curse poured upon the outlawed member for Northampton. The University College is the most godless college in the world; its professors are mainly freethinkers; but with three exceptions they quietly give up two ladies, connected with the freethinking organization, to the fury of the gods who deny them the educational advantages of that institution.

The *Jewish Chronicle* writes:—"Those interested in Biblical studies await with interest the publication of the new revision of the Authorised Version of the Old Testament, which has just been completed. Jews are especially curious to know what the scholars who have been so long engaged in the work, and who number among them several dignitaries of the Established Church, have done with the Christological passages. Will the expression 'they pierced my hands and my feet,' in the twenty-second Psalm, still be allowed to remain in defiance of the Masora? What has been made of the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, and is it of the conception of a 'virgin' or a 'young woman' that the seventh chapter speaks? We can scarcely doubt that the publication of the new Version will do much toward producing a right understanding of the Old Testament among English-speaking people. Jews, however, hardly need it. They already possess English versions written by scholars of their own body—by such men as Leeser, Benisch and Friedländer."

The *Spectator* writes:—"Eighteenth-century unbelief was a very different thing from that of our own day (we speak of English thought), as eighteenth-century belief was also. There was a great deal more violent language used against unbelievers than there is now, but there was not the same profound cleft between the two parties. It is difficult to realise the great difference that there is in the very same statement, according as it has a different background. 'Christianity is a mere superstition,' meant to the men of that day,—Christianity is an invention of priests, a fruit of the cunningly-devised alliance between the Church and the Throne, one of a set of beliefs (in the memorable language of Gibbon), 'to the multitude equally true, to the philosopher equally false, to the legislator equally useful.' In our own day the same words mean simply that Christianity is a belief opposed to the conclusions arrived at by the student of the material universe. It is as an opponent, not of democratic sentiment, but of the system of reasoned belief concerning all that we can see, and hear, and touch, that Christianity is attacked by its present enemies. In the eighteenth-century Orthodoxy was a characterestic of certain views about the spiritual universe, and now it is the characteristic of certain views about the material universe. 'Right opinion,' the opinion, that is, of people who have the ear of the public, is to be sought for among men of science, not among divines. Health has taken the place of 'salvation;' the doctor has supplanted the priest."

A New Version of Deuteronomy.—A very curious Phenician copy of Deuteronomy, or at least a part of that book, has just been brought to London. A number of Semitic savants met the other day in the office of the Palestine Exploration Fund, where the document was to be seen. The word documents ought perhaps to be used, for it consists of a number of small pieces of parchment, in a very decayed and dirty condition. On some of them Phenician letters are distinctly visible, while on others spirits of wine must be passed over with a camel-hair pencil before the letters can be seen. The writing has been to a certain extent deciphered, and is part of the book of Deuteronomy. It is said to be as old as the Moabite Stone, which is generally supposed to date back to about 900 years before Christ. It need scarcely be stated that if this turns out to be correct these pieces of leather will possess a high value, not only in money, but also in a literary sense, for they contain some curious variations in the reading, among which we have an extra commandment, which is, "Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart." By joining the first and second commandments into one,

this becomes the tenth in the Phenician version. In chap. vii. 20, instead of "hornet," the copy gives "leprosy." There is also an important variation in chap. xxviii. in relation to the "Blessings," and the death of Moses is omitted. This singular relic of the past has been brought to this country by Mr. Shapira, of Jerusalem, who was introduced to the meeting by Mr. Besant, and he explained how he became possessor of it. Five years ago he received information that some Arabs near Diban, in Moab, the same locality where the Moabite Stone was discovered, had a rare talisman, to which they attributed all the good luck which befell them. Mr. Shapira, thinking it might be something ancient, employed some Arabs to aid him, and he described their character as "people who would steal their own mother-in-law for a few piastres." By this means the talisman was carried off, and from a cave in the Wadi Mojib it now appears in the Strand, subject to the anxious scrutiny of men learned in Hebrew and Assyrian writing. The previous reputation of "Moabite Pottery," which had the name of Mr. Shapira connected with it, naturally tends to make people careful in their judgment on Moabite manuscripts. After the Moabite stone was accepted as authentic, others, Moabite stones were found, which had to be rejected; and savans are now inclined to be sceptical of anything coming from the eastern side of the Dead Sea. Before this copy of Deuteronomy can pass as genuine it will have to undergo a very minute scrutiny, and be subjected to a careful examination. It is now under this process, and Dr. Ginsberg's report, as well as that of others who are engaged on it, will be looked for with great anxiety by all Biblical scholars. Mr. Shapira talks of a million sterling as the value of this find. Purchasers at that figure will probably be scarce. (The documents have been proved to be forgeries, and are worthless.)

FROM MAHOMET'S TABLE TALK.

Say not, if people do good to us we will do good to them, and if people oppress us we will oppress them; but resolve that if people do good to you you will do good to them, and if they oppress you oppress them not again. The world and all things in it are valuable, but the most valuable thing in the world is a virtuous woman.

SELECTIONS.

TO A DEPARTED FRIEND.

Parting with friends is temporary death,
As all death is. We see no more their faces,
Nor hear their voices, save in memory;
But messages of love give us assurance
That we are not forgotten. Who shall say
That from the world of spirits comes no greeting,
No message of remembrance? It may be
The thoughts that visit us, we know not whence,
Sudden as inspiration, are the whispers
Of disembodied spirits speaking to us
As friends, who wait outside a prison wall,
Through the barred windows speak to those within.
As quiet as the lake that lies beneath me,
As quiet as the tranquil sky above me,
As quiet as a heart that beats no more,
This convent seems. Above, below, all peace!
Silence and Solitude, the soul's best friends,
Are with me here, and the tumultous world
Makes no more noise than the remotest planet.
O gentle spirit, unto the third circle
Of heaven, among the blessed souls ascended,
Who, living in the faith and dying for it,
Have gone to their reward, I do not sigh
For thee as being dead, but for myself
That I am still alive. Turn those dear eyes,
Once so benignant to me, upon mine,
That open to their tears such uncontrolled
And such continual issue. Still awhile
Have patience; I will come to thee at last,
A few more goings in and out these doors,
A few more chimings of these convent bells,
A few more prayers, a few more sighs and tears,
And the long agony of life will end,
And I shall be with thee. If I am wanting
To thy well-being, as thou art to mine,
Have patience; I will come to thee at last.
Ye minds that loiter in these cloister gardens,
Or wander far above the city walls,
Bear unto him this message, that I ever
Or speak or think of him, or weep for him.
By unseen hands uplifted in the light
Of sunset, yonder solitary cloud
Floats with its white apparel blown abroad,
And wafted up to heaven. It fades away
And melts into the air. Ah, would that I
Could thus be wafted unto thee, Franscesco,
A cloud of white, an incorporeal spirit!

From Longfellow's posthumous poem.

THE HOPE OF THE HETERODOX.

In Thee, O blessed God, I hope,
In Thee, in Thee, in Thee;
Though banned by Presbyter and Pope,
My trust is still in Thee;
Thou wilt not cast Thy servant out
Because he chanced so see
With his own eyes, and dared to doubt
What praters preach of thee.
Oh, no! no! no!

For ever and ever and ever and aye
(Though Pope and Presbyter bray),
Thou wilt not cast away
An honest soul from Thee.

I look around on earth and sky,
And Thee and ever Thee.
With open heart and open eye,
How can I fail to see?
My ear drinks in from field and fell
Life's rival floods of glee:
Where finds the priest his private hell,
When all is full of Thee?
Oh, no! no! no!
Though flocks of geese
Give heaven's high ear no peace,
I still enjoy a lease
Of happy thoughts from Thee.

My faith is strong; out of itself
It grows erect and free:
No Talmud on the Rabbi's shelf
Gives amulets to me.
Small Greek I know, nor Hebrew much,
But this I plainly see:
Two legs without the bishop's crutch
God gave to thee and me.
Oh, no! no! no!
The Church may loose and bind,
But Mind, Immortal Mind,
As free as wave or wind,
Come forth, O God, from Thee!

O pious quack! thy pills are good;
But mine as good may be,
And healthy men on healthy food
Live without you or me.
Good lady! let the doer do!
Thought is a busy bee,
Nor honey less what it doth brew,
Though very gall to thee.
Oh, no! no! no!
Though councils decree and declare,
Like a tree in open air,
The soul its foliage fair
Spreads forth, O God, to Thee!

JOHN S. BLACKIE.

Circulation of the *Chronicle and Index.*

There must be many friends, who regularly receive a copy of the *Chronicle and Index*, who would be glad of an opportunity of contributing a small amount to aid in defraying the cost of its publication and circulation. We should be glad to receive such aid, in any amounts, however small. Contributions will be gladly received by Rev. J. C. Street, Unitarian Depository, Queen's Arcade, Belfast.

Summer and Autumn, 1883.

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